

## Message Text

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SUBJECT: COMPARISON OF LABOR'S 1969 "HOT AUTUMN" WITH 1972 LABOR  
NEGOTIATIONS

1. SUMMARY. THE ITALIAN LABOR 1969 "HOT AUTUMN" WAS NOT REPEATED  
IN 1972. ALTHOUGH LABOR/ MANAGEMENT NEGOTIATIONS WERE OFTEN  
DIFFICULT IN 1972 THEY NEVER REACHED 1969 LEVELS OF TENSION AND UN-  
REST. CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES IN 1969 RELATING TO THE ECONOMY,  
DEEP DISCONTENT WITH SALARIES AND WORKING CONDITIONS, AND THE  
SURGE OF WORLDWIDE PROTEST MOVEMENTS SET THE STAGE FOR STRIKES  
AND UNREST WHICH FOLLOWED. BY 1972 THOSE CONDITIONS  
HAD CHANGED. BOTH UNION LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNMENT HAD FIRMER  
CONTROL OVER EVENTS. END SUMMARY.

2. BECAUSE MAJOR THREE- YEAR INDUSTRIAL CONTRACTS WERE UP FOR  
NEGOTIATION BOTH IN 1969 AND 1972 IT MAY BE USEFUL TO BRIEFLY  
COMPARE THE TWO COLLECTIVE BARGAINING SESSIONS TO DETERMINE  
SIMILARI-  
TIES AND CONTRASTS RESULTING IN DIFFERING POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC  
IMPACT.

3. IN 1969 THE ECONOMY WAS STRONG. AFTER A MEDIOCRE 1966 CONTRACT  
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WORKER CONSCIOUSNESS WAS HIGH AND THEY WERE PREPARED TO STRUGGLE FOR HIGHER WAGES AND A FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE INVOLVING AND LIVING CONDITIONS.

( THESE CONDITIONS WERE CHANGED BOTH BY 1969 CONTRACTS AND THE 1970 WORKERS STATUS.) EVENTS OF MAY 1968 IN PARIS AND STUDENT ACTIVISM OVER

MUCH OF THE WESTERN WORLD CONTRIBUTED TO ALREADY HIGH SOCIAL TENSION BOTH AT PLANT AND NATIONAL LEVEL. MILITANT WORKERS AND STUDENTS ROSE UP TO LEAD STRIKES AND AD HOC FACTORY GROUPS WERE FORMED. THE SCENE THUS WAS SET FOR LABOR/ MANAGEMENT CONFRONTATION RESULTING IN MASSIVE STRIKES. TOTAL HOURS LOST DUE TO STRIKE IN 1969 WERE 302,597,000.

4. THE PROTAGONISTS OF 1969 WERE CATEGORY UNIONS IN THE INDUSTRIAL SECTOR LED BY THE METAL WORKERS AND UNDER CONTINUAL PRESSURE FROM THE MILITANT FACTORY LEVEL GROUPS. LABOR CONFEDERATIONS WHICH HAS A DIFFICULT TIME ASSERTING AUTHORITY OVER INDUSTRIAL UNIONS AND THEIR RANK AND FILE OFTEN MERELY ACCEPTED DEMANDS OF THE MOST MILITANT.

5. ANOTHER COMPONENT OF THE 1969 HOT AUTUMN WAS THE CENTER/ LEFT GOVERNMENT WITH LABOR MINISTER DONET- CATTIN WHO TOOK A POSITION GENERALLY FAVORING WORKERS DEMANDS. THE SOCIALIST PARTY, A MEMBER OF THE GOVERNING COALITION, OFTEN DECLARED ITSELF IN FAVOR OF THE MORE MILITANT DEMANDS OF NEWLY CREATED " EXTRA- PARLIAMENTARY GROUPS," PER- HAPS THEREBY ENCOURAGING DISRUPTIVE AND ANARCHISTIC ELEMENTS TO THE LEFT OF THE PCI. UNIONS AND GOVERNMENT OFTEN APPEARED TO BE WORKING IN TANDEM AGAINST MANAGEMENT.

6. CONTRACT SETTLEMENT DID NOT END LABOR AGITATION AS STRIKES OVER LOCAL ISSUES CONTINUED THROUGH 1970 AND 1971. A STATE OF MORE OR LESS " PERMENENT CONFLICT"/ ENSUED.

7. THE 1972 COLLECTIVE BARGAINING SEASON FOLLOWED UPON THESE YEARS OF LABOR UNREST AND DURING PERIOD OF ECONOMIC RECESSION. SOCIAL TENSIONS WERE REDUCED AND BOTH LABOR AND MANAGEMENT WERE TRYING TO ADJUST TO PROFOUND CHANGES WHICH HAS OCCURED IN THE INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS SYSTEM.

WORKERS WERE GENERALLY WEARY OF CONTINUAL AGITATION AND NOT PREPARED FOR ALL- OUT CONFRONTATION WITH MANAGEMENT. ESTRA- PARLIAMENTARY GROUPS WHICH

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HAD LED THE 1969 AGITATION HAD BEEN DECISIVELY REJECTED BY THE VOTERS IN THE MAY 1972 ELECTIONS. THEY HAD THUS LOST PRESTIGE AND COULD NO LONGER PURPORT TO SPEAK FOR THE MASS OF WORKERS. THE PCI SHOWED ITS RESOLUTE OPPOSITION TO THESE GROUPS AND THEIR DISRUPTIVE TACTICS.

8. UNION LEADERS BY 1972 HAD TO A LARGE EXTENT REASSERTED THEIR AUTHORITY, AT THE SAME TIME BEING CAREFUL TO CARRY OUT EXTENSIVE CONSULTATIONS WITH THE RANK AND FILE SO AS TO PRODUCE CONSENSUS. IN JULY 1972 A FEDERATION OF THE THREE MAJOR TRADE UNIONS WAS FORMED AND ITS TASK OF INSTITUTIONALIZING COMMON COLLECTIVE BARGAINING DEMANDS ( UNITY OF ACTION) HELPED STABILIZED THE SCENE AND PREVENTED INTER- UNION COMPETITION OR ESCALATION OF DEMANDS. TOTAL HOURS LOST TO STRIKE

IN 1972 WERE 134,613,000.

9. THE CENTER GOVERNMENT OF PRIME MINISTER ANDREOTTI AND LABOR MINISTER COPPO IN 1972, WHILE ABOUT AS DEEPLY INVOLVED IN DISPUTE SETTLEMENT AS THE CENTER/ LEFT GOVERNMENT OF 1969 AVOIDED DRAMATIZATION OF THE ISSUES AND TOOK THE POSTURE OF NEUTRAL MEDIATOR. LABOR MINISTER COPPO RELUCTANTLY AND AS A FINAL STEP PROPOSED SOLUTIONS

WHEN DIFFERENCES BETWEEN LABOR AND MANAGEMENT NARROWED. TO AVOID BEING CONFRONTED WITH A WHOLE GROUP OF UNRESOLVED LABOR DISPUTES AND THE CONSEQUENT DANGER OF GENERAL STRIKES LABOR MINISTER COPPO HANDLED THE DISPUTES ONE BY ONE, ISOLATING AND LEAVING FOR LAST THE METAL WORKERS WHO HAS LED MILITANT INDUSTRIAL TRADE UNIONISTS IN 1969. WHILE

UNIONS WERE GENERALLY ANTI- GOVERNMENT IN 1972, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS FORCED THEM TO BE CAUTIOUS AND TO LIMIT LABOR AGITATION.

10. WAGE INCREASES AND FRINGE BENEFITS NEGOTIATED IN 1969 CONTRACTS WERE GENERALLY A BIT MORE THAN THE 1972 SETTLEMENTS. THERE WERE HOW-

EVER TWO MORE IMPORTANT DIFFERENCES. FIRST, THE ECONOMIC COST AND  
SOCIAL TENSION DUE TO STRIKES IN 1969 VS. 1972. THERE WERE WELL OVER  
TWICE AS MANY HOURS LOST DUE TO STRIKES IN 1969. SECOND, 1969  
SETTLEMENTS DID NOT END LABOR AGITATION AS STRIKES OVER LOCAL ISSUES  
CONTINUED THROUGH 1970 AND 1971. CONTRACT SETTLEMENTS IN 1972  
UNUALLY  
ENDED AGITATION SINCE WORKERS LESS COMBATIVE AND PREPARED RETURN  
TO  
WORK. LOCAL BARGAINING WAS POSTPONED IN MANY CONTRACTS FOR ONE  
YEAR  
OR MORE.  
DECONTROL MAY 1974. VOLPE  
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